

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
April 9, 2018**

PI 18-08

TO: County Social Services
Regional Supervisors
Division of Juvenile Services
Tribal Social Services
PATH-North Dakota

FROM: Kelsey Bless, Permanency Administrator

SUBJECT: **PATH Regular Foster Care**

PROGRAMS: Foster Care Maintenance Payments 623-05
Foster Care Permanency Planning 624-05

RETENTION: Until manualized

EFFECTIVE: **Immediately**

Children and Family Services approved PATH ND to offer additional placement options to foster children through the licensing of PATH Regular foster homes. The provider type "PATH Regular" is equivalent to a County foster home with additional training requirements for the foster care provider, additional services for the foster family, completion of specific child assessments upon intake, as well as fulltime case management for each child accepted into a PATH Regular placement. The goal of this expanded continuum was presented by PATH as a way to support and assist ND in meeting the growing need of family foster homes for children in need of placement. The effort is intended to relieve pressure from counties and have a direct referral option for placement.

This additional licensing effort is currently **a pilot and is only offered in Region III (Devils Lake) and Region VII (Bismarck/Mandan) until further notice.** Foster care policy has been updated to reflect the additional level of care, as well as offer clarity to how the level is available and reimbursed to children.

- **PATH Provider Types**
 - Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC)
 - Regular Foster Care

- **PATH Levels of Care**

- Treatment Foster Care (TFC)
 - Step Down
 - County Flow Through (sibling placements)
- Regular Foster Care

Foster care case managers can access the PATH Regular Foster Care program by contacting the agency directly and completing the required agency referral application. PATH Regular Foster Care does not require the universal application or a group home approval by the regional office.

Questions can be directed to Kelsey Bless at 701-328-3581 or kmbless@nd.gov

POLICY CHANGES:

Therapeutic-PATH Foster Care Rates 623-05-20-35

ND-Therapeutic Providers:

PATH ND is a private non-profit child and family services agency that began operations in North Dakota in 1994. PATH has provided evidenced-based services and supports to children and families in North Dakota as a child placing agency. PATH is accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Services to Children and Families (COA).

Billing Address:

PATH, Inc. ND

1202 Westrac Dr S, Suite 400

Fargo, ND 58103

Rice Creek Professional Building
5985 Rice Creek Pkwy, Suite 202
Shoreview, MN 55126

PATH Maintenance Rates (July 1, 2015) Payments are made using the daily rate times the number of days in care.

LEVELS OF CARE OFFERED BY THE THERAPEUTIC PROVIDER-PATH ND	DAILY RATE
Therapeutic Treatment <u>(TFC)</u> <i>PATH provides case management</i>	\$108.18
PATH Regular <u>(Step Down)</u> <u>Previous TFC placement no longer in need of higher level is stepped down in the same TFC provider</u>	\$66.23

<u>home. PATH continues to provide case management.</u>	
County Flow Through <i>Sibling placement - Custodian provides case management to the child.</i>	Family Foster Care Maintenance Rate (Based on Age)
<u>PATH Regular Foster Care</u> <u>PATH provides case management</u>	<u>\$66.23</u>

~~The therapeutic foster~~ND foster care rates are reviewed and revised annually, based on legislative action.

The custodian and the child's team will evaluate the child's progress at quarterly meetings to determine the appropriate level of care. If a child begins as a treatment foster care (TFC) placement, it may be determined that PATH Step Down is necessary and appropriate over time. placement in the PATH Regular (Step Down) option is appropriate, If so, the custodian and PATH will sign the needed documentation at the Child & Family Team meeting. The foster care case manager will be responsible to notify the county eligibility worker of any changes in placement level /rate, inclusive of completing a new SFN 45 immediately.

PATH MONTHLY BILLING:

Payments to PATH should not be authorized until a billing statement has been received for the appropriate month. The amount billed is based on the level of care (~~Tx-TFC~~ rate, Step Down rate, Regular rate, County rate) and number of days in placement, not to exceed the number of days in the month. Reimbursement of overlapping days of placement from one ~~therapeutic-PATH~~ provider to another is not allowed. Example: A child changes placement from one therapeutic home to another on the 3rd of the month, only one therapeutic provider can be reimbursed for the 3rd.

The PATH billing office will send a separate bill to the financial county for each child monthly. The county should receive the bill on or around the 12th of the month following the month of service. Eligibility workers must wait for the bill prior to authorizing payments. The payment amount is **not** automatically calculated by the payment system and will require manual data entry by the county eligibility worker. The bill must be kept in the foster care eligibility file for auditing purposes.

The monthly bill from the agency must provide an itemization of each placement with each provider:

1. For bills containing multiple providers, each provider must have an approved placement in FRAME and payment authorization must be made to each provider based on the billed dates and amount specific to that provider.
2. Do not authorize a lump sum payment to only one provider if multiple placements exist during the billing cycle.
3. Secondary placements in a therapeutic home when a child is in a primary therapeutic placement are not reimbursable (PATH to PATH). However, if the child is transitioning to a PATH home from a non-PATH provider (county home, group home, etc.) the "pre-placement" can be reimbursed as a secondary placement.
4. If there is an overpayment made to a PATH provider, Children & Family Services (CFS) can auto-recoup the overpayment during either the supplemental or standard check write so long as the provider where the overpayment took place has a foster care placement. If there is not a placement with the specified provider, CFS will generate a letter for PATH to reimburse NDDHS directly.

PATH Irregular Payments

Allowable irregular payment reimbursements per policy 623-05-25-05 are authorized through the county as follows:

1. All irregular payments must be approved as set forth in policy and should be documented in the Child and Family Team Meeting notes.
2. Case managers must provide the eligibility worker with documentation of the approved irregular expenses.
3. After approval to purchase, the PATH foster care provider will email/fax/mail receipts to a designated PATH case worker. The PATH case worker will distribute the receipts to the county case manager for reimbursement to PATH.
4. The county case manager will provide the eligibility worker with a copy of the receipts and the PATH worker will provide the PATH billing office with a copy of the receipts (unless other arrangements have been made between the PATH worker and the County case managers in regard to distribution of the receipts).

5. PATH **DOES NOT** itemize irregular expenses on the monthly bill. bill the irregular expenses for PATH Regular (Step Down) or County (Flow Through) placements to the county. They PATH will only bill the standard maintenance rate for the specified level of care. therapeutic level of care. It is the responsibility of the county to review any receipts submitted in addition to the standard maintenance bill and reimburse the irregular payments to PATH (Maintenance rate + irregular receipts = total monthly reimbursement). In turn, PATH will reimburse the foster parents the amount of payment received from the county to cover the irregular expenses for the billing cycle.
6. If PATH's billing office has questions regarding the amount received over and above the standard foster care rate, the county worker will be contacted for clarification.

How to Authorize the Irregular Payments in the payment system:

The ND payment system allows only two irregular payment codes to be authorized to ~~all~~ PATH therapeutic providers:

1. Code 53 - transportation to school
2. Code 71 - parent/infant care

These irregular payments must be authorized separately and on the irregular payment screen.

All other allowable irregular payments for PATH Regular (Step Down) and PATH Step Down, County (Flow Through) or PATH Regular Foster Care must be added to the maintenance payment amount for the billable month.

Example: PATH billed the county for one child:

Date: March 2018

Level of Care: Regular Foster Care

Rate: March 2018

Service Dates: March 1 - March 15 = 15 days

Total: \$66.23 (PATH Regular Foster Care rate) x 15 days = \$993.45

- In addition, an approved daycare bill was submitted charging \$27/day x 7 days = \$189

County will combine the PATH bill + daycare bill for total reimbursement = \$993.45 + \$189 = **\$1,183.45**

- o The CCWIPS payment/rate for March ~~2016-would~~must be entered as \$1,183.45.

Payment - General Principles 623-05-20-05

All foster care standard maintenance payments must be authorized the last week of the month prior to the scheduled standard check write. NDDHS has an established payment schedule for various programs. The calendar of payment dates is sent to all foster care providers the end of each calendar year, showing which date of the month the foster care standard maintenance payment will be issued from NDDHS and either mailed or direct deposited into the account of the provider.

Overlapping Payments

In general, when a child moves from one foster care placement to another during a month, payment should be made to each provider for the day of the move. The overlapping date can be paid when a child's placement changes from:

- a facility to another facility not under the same umbrella agency.
- a facility to a family foster home or to a PATH home.
- a ~~PATH~~therapeutic agency -home to a family foster home (~~not PATH~~) or facility.
- a family foster home to a facility or ~~PATH~~therapeutic provider agency.

The exception to this rule is when the placements are within the same provider or umbrella agency (ex: PATH). ~~PATH-Therapeutic agencies~~ and dual-licensed facility providers fall under the overlapping date exception.

Examples:

1. When a child moves from one ~~PATH~~ provider to another ~~PATH~~ provider within the same agency, only one provider is paid for the move date.
2. When a child moves from one level of care to a higher or lower level of care within the same facility; the umbrella facility is only paid for one day.

	Start Date	End Date
DBGR – PRTF	1/1/03	6/14/03

DBGR – RCCF	6/15/03	
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Features of the ~~CCWIPS~~-payment system are:

1. Providers will receive one payment during the regular monthly check write, for all children placed in their care.
2. The monthly payment will be accompanied by a remittance advice showing each segment of every payment included for each child's care.
3. The main check write will be the second to the last working day each month, with the opportunity to issue weekly supplemental payments as needed.
4. All maintenance payments will be paid at a daily rate. This means that payment amounts will vary from month to month. The remittance advice accompanying the payment will provide a detailed explanation.
5. County social services, Division of Juvenile Services, and Regional Human Service Centers are responsible for entering court order, placement, provider and care plan information into FRAME and CCWIPS in order to generate a payment to the applicable provider.
 - a. A full payment will calculate when a court order, provider license, placement date, and care plan is current for the payment month.
 - b. A partial payment will calculate when a court order, provider license, or placement date expires or ends prior to the last day of the payment month.
 - c. No payment will calculate when a court order, provider license, placement ends, or no current care plan is entered in-place prior to the payment month.
 - d. Over or under payments may occur when additional information is entered, which effect the payment calculation. Once all information has been updated in the case management system, a payment may be issued during the next supplemental check write.

6. Questions about the timeliness or amount of a foster care payment will be directed to the county office responsible for processing the payment.
7. Questions regarding subsidized adoption payments can be directed to the central office, CFS Adoption Administrator.
8. Deductions from foster care maintenance payments cannot be withheld from unpaid obligations incurred by the foster care provider on behalf of the foster child, such as child care, etc. Such obligations are the responsibility of the foster care provider.
9. Providers are encouraged to set up direct deposit to receive maintenance payments more quickly (typically within 24 working hours of the date in which NDDHS issues payment). If a provider chooses to get a paper check sent in the mail, NDDHS is not responsible for timeliness of the US Postal Service.
 - a. Direct Deposit information can be sent to CFS. A provider must show third party verification by providing a bank direct deposit form or a voided check indicating the bank routing number and account number. The provider should indicate if the account is savings or checking and also if they are a subsidized adoption or a foster care provider.

Irregular Payment Specific to Placement Setting 623-05-25-05

Irregular Payments Family Foster Care:

Foster children placed in a licensed or approved (Tribal Affidavit) family foster home are eligible for irregular maintenance payments.

Irregular Payments for a Non-Foster Care Placement:

Foster children placed in a non-foster care setting with an unlicensed provider, at the hospital, or in relative/kinship care do not qualify for irregular maintenance payments.

Irregular Payments in ~~PATH Therapeutic Family~~ Foster Care:

1. Therapeutic Level: Only 2 codes allowed.

- a. Code 53: Travel for foster parents to transport to school, and
 - b. Code 71: If the foster child has their own child
2. Step Down
- a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements, with the exception of Category 20 and Category 60. Initial clothing will not be required as a "step down" level of care will not occur during the child's first five months of placement. Annual clothing allowance is offered by PATH to the foster child.
3. County ~~(Flow Through)~~
- a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements apply.
4. PATH Regular Foster Care
- a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements apply, with the exception of Category 60.

Irregular Payments in Group & Residential Care:

The irregular payment policy has very limited application to children in group and residential care. An RCCF has an established daily rate rate setting in those instances is dictated by N.D.A.C. 75-03-15 "Rate Setting". Children placed in an RCCF are only eligible for:

- Category 10
- Category 20
- Category 50
- Category 80

Irregular Payments in PRTF's:

Foster care funds cannot pay for any portion of a child's cost of care in a PRTF, including irregular payments. Irregular payments may be included in the PRTF's direct rate based on historical costs as outlined in N.D.A.C 75-02-09-06.